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Companion Classics.

Famous Americans,

BY

HON. JUSTIN MCCARTHY,

Member of Parliament.



Perry Mason & Company.

Companion Classics.

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FAMOUS AMERICANS.
By Hon. Justin McCarthy, M. P.

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ONE of the happiest things that can befall a human being is to be born with the gift of appreciation. The man of eclectic tastes and generous sympathies finds friends everywhere; and when he himself possesses originality and energy, the elements of power, he naturally associates with the leaders of the race, learning to know them as they really are.

Mr. Justin McCarthy, M. P., most fully answers this description. A man of action as well as a man of letters, almost equally at home in America and in Great Britain, he has met the makers of history, and his portraits of them have the very charm of life.

Famous Americans.

HE first American household to which I was welcomed when I first visited the States was the home of William Cullen Bryant, on Long Island, in New York harbor. Mr. Bryant accompanied us in the steamer from New York and pointed out every place of interest on the way, among others the island off which Fenimore Cooper's *Water Witch* was lying when the story begins. Oh, the dear delights of that *Water Witch*! When I was a boy I loved it—and the sight of the island brought back my boyhood.

Mr. Bryant was a delightful host and a charming companion. He was not a large and impressive man in figure, but he had a superb and Jupiter-like head. His reading was immense and varied. He had travelled much and remembered what he saw. He knew several languages, and could make an eloquent speech in French, Italian, German or Spanish.

Bryant impressed me almost terribly by his knowledge of trees and plants. While we were driving together round and about his country home he often embarrassed me by asking whether this or that tree or plant flourished in England, and if so, in what particular part of England. Well, I think I know an oak when I see it, but I am not always quite sure. I know a poplar—everybody knows a poplar; I know a birch, and I know a palm, but there my knowledge ends.

With Bryant I felt mightily ashamed of my ignorance.

But we talked of poetry a great deal, and of poets, and public men of all kinds, and artists of all kinds—and he was well acquainted with the great picture-galleries of Europe. Our friendship kept on up to the time of my second return to England, just before his death.

Bryant once gave me a fine photograph of himself. It still hangs in my study, where I am writing this. I turn to look up at the noble forehead, the superb and patriarchal beard. I may say frankly that Bryant the man impressed me far more than Bryant the poet, although I was in sympathy with his poetry and had appreciated it since I was a small boy in an Irish seaport city.

First Meeting with Emerson.

It was at a comparatively late period of my first visit to America that I made the acquaintance of Boston. The first visitor we had in Boston was Emerson, the second was Longfellow. I had written to Emerson's house at Concord, enclosing my letter of introduction, and as he happened to be coming to town, he at once called on me. When I received his card I felt a thrill of emotion which I could hardly describe.

Emerson had always been an idol among the young men and women with whom I was associated from my most youthful days, and I could hardly realize that in a moment or two I was to stand in the graced presence of the man himself. I need hardly say that Emerson soon put me at my ease.

The first that impressed me about him was the

total absence of anything like the manner of what I may call the professional philosopher. He talked away easily and pleasantly about places and books and men. He had read English literature quite "up to date," as the distressing English phrase now puts it. He asked me about an English author of what seemed to be rising distinction then, — a man long since dead and I fear almost forgotten, — who had been staying a few days in Boston, and had not made himself known to anybody.

"We should have been so glad to welcome him!" Emerson said.

I explained that the author was a very modest man.

"But he might have thought of us," Emerson replied, with a sweet smile, "and have sacrificed his own feelings for the pleasure it would give us."

Now the author in question had then quite lately published his first book, — his first and, I believe, his last, — and although many of us in London thought highly of it, I had not expected that it would be known to any one on the American side of the Atlantic. I have regretted that I did not write at once to the English author and tell him what Emerson thought of his book.

At the Saturday Club.

I told Emerson that I had letters of introduction to some distinguished men in Boston. He at once, with a bright smile, told me that the best way of meeting most of them was to be his guest at the next dinner of the Saturday Club.

On the day when I was Emerson's guest, Longfellow was there, and Holmes, James T.

Fields, Whipple, and many more whose names were familiar to me, and whom it was a delight to see and to hear and to talk with. Lowell, for some reason, was not there. I think the only visitor from London besides myself was Fechter, the once-famous actor, who had come out with the intention of settling in the States. I had many questions to ask of Emerson that night.

I was greatly interested in hearing Emerson talk about Walt Whitman, whom he had himself but lately introduced to the public of America, and even of England. "A strong man," he said, after many other words of appreciation and of eulogy, "but method is needed even for strength." Then he reminded me of the wonderful method in symmetry and muscle of the Farnese Hercules. A day or two later he took me round most of the public institutions of Boston, and in the Athenæum, I think it was, we came upon a cast of that same Hercules. Then he recalled to me what he had been saying concerning strength and method.

Wendell Phillips's Convictions.

We talked about Wendell Phillips, whom I had already met in New York, and he expressed his regret that Phillips could not be prevailed upon to come to any of the dinners of the Saturday Club, for he was so strong a devotee of total abstinence that he was unwilling to be present at a dinner where wine was drunk. I began to express somewhat emphatically my regret that a man so gifted and otherwise so genial should have such rigid views. Emerson smiled his sweet smile again, and said, "Well, well, I know how much Wendell Phillips likes pleasant and

intellectual company, and so let us at least give him the credit of his hair-shirt."

"A Gracious Reality."

I saw Emerson several times after that during my first and second visits to the States. He was singularly kind, and I may be allowed to say that at that time I had no claim whatever on him but that established by some common friendships and many common sympathies.

Since his death I have seen his house in Concord. I made a pilgrimage to the place, and wandered round the roads and visited the Walden of Thoreau. But Thoreau was only a shadow to me, — a man whose writings I had read and whom I had read of, — while Emerson was a strong and gracious reality.

Thinking of Emerson and my own personal intercourse with him, slight and casual, indeed, but to me most impressive, I have wondered whether men of his elevation and his gifts really quite understand how much delight they pour into the life of a stranger by a friendly reception and a few kindly talks. I have still two or three letters of his, and I am not likely to lose them or to part with them.

Expecting to find him stately, serene, solemn, perhaps even severe, I found him fresh, genial, buoyant in manner, utterly above all self-consciousness, disposed to enter with the fullest sympathy and the quickest interest into the feelings and the ideas of any one with whom he was conversing.

I have met a good many famous men, but I do not know that any one among them impressed

me more strongly and more sweetly than did Emerson.

The Charm of Longfellow.

I have already said that the second famous American who called on me in Boston was Longfellow, who had been for years before I saw him an especial favorite with the English public, and with the Irish public as well. He took our hearts by storm.

It was an almost incredible delight to me to see him, and to find myself in conversation with him. His talk was charming—easy, bright, vivacious, utterly unaffected. He knew many parts of the Old World very well, and we had several acquaintanceships in common.

Longfellow asked us to his house in Cambridge, and of course we went more than once. The acquaintanceship was kept up during the whole of my first and second visits to the United States. Then a long interval occurred; many things happened, and when I went back to the States a few years ago Longfellow was dead.

I have never met a more gracious host than Longfellow, nor a more kindly companion, although certain Boston people have told me that they found him somewhat cold, and even chilling. I always found Longfellow most genial, unaffected and delightful.

Once I ventured to argue with him about Goethe, of whom I have always been a passionate admirer. When I insisted that Longfellow had disparaged Goethe in "Hyperion," Longfellow gently but firmly insisted that he had done nothing of the kind. I held fast to my point—as if I did not know my "Hyperion" better

than he did! At last the poet went to his shelves, took down the volume, and challenged me to find the disparaging passage. In half a moment I found it, sure enough; so he pleasantly owned up, said he had quite forgotten all about writing it, and that he certainly would not think of uttering such words of disparagement now. I was very proud of my triumph, mainly because it made it clear to him that I knew his book better than he did.

Translations of a **Masterpiece.**

I asked him about the beautiful and almost perfect translation brought into "Hyperion" from Uhland's ballad—the translation opening with the lines:

Many a year is in its grave
Since last I crossed this restless wave,
And the evening, bright as ever,
Shines on ruin, rock and river.

He told me the translation was not by him, but by a lady. He did not tell me who she was, and I did not ask him, for fear lest I should, perhaps, be awakening melancholy reflections. He said, as indeed he has said in "Hyperion," that the one thing in which it fell short of the original was in failing to produce the peculiar measure which seemed like the accompaniment of the rocking of a boat.

I told him of a translation by a poet, a countryman of mine, long since dead, in which everything else had been sacrificed to the reproduction of this peculiar measure—a measure easy and natural in German, but not easy or natural in English. I recited the version to

him. He agreed with me that the reproduction of the measure was most skilfully accomplished, but that it was done at the sacrifice of much of the beauty of the poem.

Longfellow liked to show off his pictures and busts and casts and curios, and to tell some little anecdote or give some interesting explanation about each.

In Love with the Elizabethans.

He had a strong love for many of the dramas not by Shakespeare, of the Elizabethan dramas, I mean. He could quote with exquisite taste some beautiful and thrilling passages from Massinger, or Beaumont and Fletcher, or Webster. As I, too, had, and have, a strong affection for those rarely read dramatists, any one can guess what pleasure I found in Longfellow's keen and artistic appreciation of their beauty, strength, pathos and passion.

I think nothing impressed me more in Longfellow than his unforced and genial toleration of differences of opinion. Yet I have heard men say in the States that he was not tolerant except where literature and art were concerned.

A distinguished American whom I knew well at one time told me that Longfellow had spoken of a certain great American reformer and anti-slavery advocate as merely an unnecessary man. The idea conveyed to my mind was that Longfellow chafed at the disturbing of public quiet, or rather, public inaction, by any political agitation, whatever its purpose. Such, we know, is the disposition of many literary men and many artists. But so far as I knew of Longfellow, I never heard him express any sentiment which

was not in favor of the earliest lightening of the load of human suffering.

Charles Sumner, the Statesman.

Among the letters of introduction which I brought out from England to distinguished Americans, on my first visit to the United States, was one from John Bright to Mr. Charles Sumner. I had only occasion to deliver it in a formal sort of way. I happened, not long after my arrival, to meet Mr. Sumner in the office of the New York *Independent*.

I was talking with one of the editors of the paper, when the door of the room opened, and a tall and stately man came in. The moment I saw the face and the form, I was clear in my mind that somebody well worth knowing had entered the room. Then I was introduced to Senator Sumner.

I told him of my letter of introduction to him from John Bright, and added that I meant to put off presenting it to him until we met in Washington, where at that time I had not yet been. A certain sort of friendship sprang up from that day between Mr. Sumner and myself.

Sumner was a man who had impressed his image somewhat firmly on the English mind. Men in England knew of him as a strong and most eloquent opponent of slavery, and up to the outbreak of the Civil War in the United States there was hardly an Englishman who was not a convinced opponent of the plantation system; but, at the time of which I write, Mr. Sumner had made himself personally unpopular in England by the course he had taken with regard to the *Alabama* dispute.

Mr. Sumner had been a lover of England—had been devoted to England. He honored her as the country which had made so vast a sacrifice of money to rid herself of the slave system in her West Indian colonies and possessions. He counted with absolute certainty on England's sympathy with the North when the Civil War broke out. When he found that the governing classes and the moneyed classes and the aristocracy generally were in favor of the South, he believed that England had become renegade to her own most honored principles.

Not the People's Voice.

He was mistaken. A stranger is very apt to confound the utterances of the governing classes in England with the voice of the people of England. The vast majority of the people of England were from first to last on the side of the North. Mr. Sumner did not see this. He and I had many a long talk over the question; but he could not be reasoned out of his own belief. His love for England turned into something very like hate. He had been all his life a devoted advocate of peace; now it seemed to many as if his heart were set on driving America into a war with England.

He was chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations—a position which, added to his personal influence, eloquence and force of character, gave him a great place in the controversy. He started the theory of "consequential" or "indirect" damages for the harm done by the *Alabama*—a theory which the government of the United States afterward quietly abandoned, and in which neither General Grant

nor Mr. Hamilton Fish, then the Secretary of State, had ever put any faith.

I am not, however, going to try to revive this old and dead controversy. I am only concerned about the part which Mr. Sumner took in it. One day, I think it was in Washington, Mr. Sumner was expounding to me his theory of the indirect damages.

He took a sheet of paper, and there he set down a sort of chart of his principle. It looked on the paper very much like a pedigree, a sort of family tree. This act of damage created others which went off to the left and were bracketed there; this other created new damages, too, which went off to the right hand, and were bracketed there; and out of each of these grew others, going off also to the right and left. I have always kept this chart of the consequential damages as an interesting historical relic or curiosity.

Powerful — and Ponderous.

Mr. Sumner's style of speaking impressed me as being too elaborately got up. It was very powerful, but it was also somewhat ponderous. He seemed to me to have the intellectual weakness, or at all events overcarefulness, which I have noticed in other great speakers — the desire to make his review of the case absolutely exhaustive, to leave nothing whatever unsaid, or not sufficiently said. There was a want of perspective — everything was made as prominent as everything else.

Mr. Sumner had not a keen sense of humor, as will be seen from an anecdote which he told me. Bright, he observed, once told him that it

was a great thing for an Englishman to be made a Right Honorable. "You see the title sticks to you forever." Mr. Sumner seriously believed that this was a deliberate expression of Bright's own personal feeling and personal ambition.

Any one who really knew Bright would know that that was "only his fun"—his way of throwing contempt on the mean ambition of other men. I can see in imagination the scornful lip and the satirical expression of Bright as he promulgated that doctrine.

"Stick to the States."

When I was about to leave America, after my first visit, a visit of considerable length, I met Mr. Sumner, and I told him I was going back to Europe. He knew that I was writing a good deal for certain American newspapers and magazines, and he said, "But you are only going *en congé*, I hope?" I explained to him that I hoped to return to the States again and again, but that I had no intention of giving up London as a home.

He was most kind, and urged me strongly to stick to the United States, where, he was good enough to say, I had already made many friends. I could not alter my plans, however. Even already I saw signs of a great political struggle coming up for my own country—for Ireland—in which I had a hope and an ambition to play some part, however insignificant.

But for that hope and that ambition I should probably have settled down in the United States, for which I had grown already to have a strong and sincere, and even an almost sentimental, affection. I have always had a grateful and

genial memory of Mr. Sumner's kindly advice and friendly persistency.

I have a deep and clearly cut impression of him. People said he was overbearing; I did not find him so. Of course he was a man who became terribly—I cannot use a weaker word—engrossed in any subject which was on his mind. I should think that any one who met him while he was working out his scheme of the indirect damages would have found it hard to get him to take much interest in any other subject. But when his mind was not thus actually absorbed, he could be a delightful talker on various subjects. And of what account can a man be in political life whose mind is not sometimes wholly absorbed in one particular subject?

Greeley, a Great Journalist.

When I first went to the United States, Horace Greeley was one of the men whom every stranger wished to see. He was to us a sort of Benjamin Franklin.

We all knew that Greeley had fought his way up from utter poverty to become a great journalist, who could lend a powerful hand in the making of cabinets and of presidents. For me, as a journalist, such a figure had naturally an especial interest.

Then we had known something of Horace Greeley in England. I wrote, in a long since forgotten novel of mine, about the Exhibition of the year 1851 in London as "the year which brought into official coöperation and fellowship the three most single-minded, straightforward, disinterested men then living in the world—

Richard Cobden, Arthur, Duke of Wellington, and Horace Greeley." These three were, with many others, commissioners for the arrangement of the great international exhibition in the Crystal Palace, the first exhibition of the kind ever held.

The name of the Duke of Wellington seems to belong to an age which has become purely historical. Those who knew Richard Cobden well — I was one of them — are fast diminishing in numbers. I suppose it is so in the United States with those who knew Horace Greeley. Still, Horace Greeley was a typical and assuredly, in his way, a great American.

Benevolent and Intelligent.

I was greatly interested in Mr. Greeley's appearance — in the broad, benevolent forehead and the kindly, shrewd eyes beaming through good-natured spectacles. He reminded me of Mr. Pickwick. He reminded me of Count Cavour. No man could be disparaged when his face and forehead are compared in benevolence with those of Mr. Pickwick, and in intelligence with those of Count Cavour.

Mr. Greeley had then a country-place at Chappaqua, and he was living, while in town, at a hotel in Union Square. He showed me about New York a great deal. He knew instinctively what I wanted to see.

It was a campaign season, and he was stumping the country for General Grant and Mr. Schuyler Colfax. He allowed me to accompany him to a number of meetings in New York City and New York State and New Jersey.

I had always heard that he was a very bad

speaker—at public meetings. I did not think so. I thought he had that soundest kind of eloquence which consists in sending your arrow of argument most straightly and directly to its mark. I could listen to him with intense and unfaltering interest.

I was often at Mr. Greeley's house, and I met him at many houses in New York. He lived in a fashion of truly republican simplicity. He was fond, however, of dining out, although he drank no wine; he was fond of going to the theatre, and he enjoyed in a hearty, boyish fashion, all manner of harmless pleasures.

At the Home of Two Poets.

His conversation was wonderfully shrewd, sharp and intelligent. I used to meet him very often on Sunday evenings at the house of the two poets, Alice and Phœbe Carey. There used to be delightful Sunday evening gatherings at their little house just above Union Square—simple, modest, unpretentious gatherings, but with plenty of intellect to make them attractive.

Mr. Greeley often went there, and it used to interest me greatly to see how the man who was really a power in American politics, and whose great paper had to be counted as a potent factor in every crisis, political or social, could throw his whole soul into the pleasant literary talks which we used to have there.

In his quiet simplicity and suppressed strength he sometimes reminded me of John Bright; and, indeed, also in an occasional faculty of suddenly bracing himself up and bearing down on somebody who was becoming too dogmatic and giving himself too many airs.

Most of the guests who used to assemble in those pleasant rooms are long since gone. The sisters Carey are both gone. Ole Bull, the once famous Norwegian violinist, in his early days put forward as a rival of the immortal Paganini, is gone. Horace Greeley is gone. Mr. Barnum, who was a constant figure there, — I remember him as a retiring, quiet man who enjoyed the evenings, apparently, but who certainly did not seem inclined to talk much to anybody, although he could talk very well if anybody took the trouble of drawing him out, — Mr. Barnum is gone.

Greeley as a Farmer.

Greeley was an immense lover of farming and gardening, and all that pertains to farm and garden. As we say now in London, he “fancied himself” in farming and gardening. It was an interesting spectacle to see him surrounded by farmers — by real, practical farmers — at some agricultural meeting near to his country home in New York State.

Nothing could be more touching than the veneration which the farmers had for him as a politician and a journalist, the way in which they looked up to him for light and leading in all political and social affairs — and then the kindly indulgence, the suppressed compassion they had for his utterances on all agricultural questions.

Not one of them would allow Mr. Greeley to know what he really thought of Greeley’s views on agriculture; but there was not one whose face, when the great man talked of farming, did not become, as Lady Macbeth says, “a book

where men might read strange matters." The farmers regarded him, where farming was concerned, as kindly people might regard a clever child digging in his little garden, and occasionally planting things with their roots in the air.

There used to be a story about Horace Greeley's telling some friend that he had made a certain considerable sum in one year by his farming operations. Horace explained it all item by item. He had got so much for grain, so much for vegetables, so much for fruits; he could prove every amount, every figure—there could be no mistake about that. But then the inconsiderate question was asked, What were the expenses—what did it all cost you?

Then a momentary puzzlement came over the political philosopher's expressive face, and was followed by a beaming, self-confessing and entirely characteristic smile.

"I never thought of that," he placidly owned up. "I quite forgot to take account of the expenses."

"The Past is Secure."

Greeley once used a very happy phrase to me which I have treasured ever since and have quoted often. Let me quote it once again. He was telling me about some money he had once come in for, and which he had muddled away somehow, very likely in some quixotic scheme of benevolence.

"It is all gone," he said, "and so much the better." Then he paused for a moment, and added, in a subdued and convinced tone of voice, "The past at least is secure."

Yes, the past is always secure. I am sure

there was much about Horace Greeley's past which is always secure, which could never be taken from him—much, too, about his past which could never be taken from his country.

The Pastor of Plymouth Church.

I first met Henry Ward Beecher in the office of the *Morning Star* newspaper in London. The *Morning Star*, long since dead, was the organ of John Bright, and was devoted to the cause of the Federal government during the American Civil War. Mr. Beecher came over to England to advocate the cause of the Northern States, and he naturally presented himself on his arrival in London at the office of the *Morning Star*. It was arranged that he should address a great meeting in Exeter Hall.

At that time public opinion was curiously divided in London on the subject of the American Civil War. What is called "society" went, on the whole, for the South; the English democracy in London and out of it, unlettered and well-lettered, went for the North.

Exeter Hall, when Mr. Beecher entered it, was crowded to overflowing. A large number of those who had obtained seats were devoted advocates of the Southern cause.

I do not think Mr. Beecher had been quite prepared for this. I fancy he was at first under the impression that he was about to address an entirely sympathetic audience. A very few seconds satisfied him that he had a much more difficult task to deal with, and I never saw any man brace himself up more readily and more vigorously for an unexpected struggle.

I noticed a curious twinkle in his eye that

seemed to mean business as he pulled himself together for the work. He threw off, to begin with, some magnificent sentences, as if to let the whole of his audience, unfriendly as well as friendly, know that he was a speaker worth listening to, whom it would be as well not to lose the chance of hearing, whether you agreed with him or whether you did not. His voice rang thrillingly through the great hall, and he accomplished his first purpose—he made his audience anxious to hear what he might have to say.

Inspired by Interruptions.

Then he began to show his gift of reply and of repartee. There are some great speakers who are utterly put out by interruption; there are other great speakers who are lifted and inspired to their very greatest by interruption. Mr. Beecher soon proved himself to be one of the latter class.

Every interrupting sentence brought back a reply, keen, sarcastic, rhetorical, crushing. In the course of his speech he said something about the religious feeling of the North. "Religious feeling," some one cried out, "and war!" The meaning was obvious—you Northerners call yourselves religious, and yet you carry on war. The reply came as the explosion of the gun-powder follows the touch of fire.

"Religion and war!" Mr. Beecher called out. "And what is the device on the national flag of England? Is it not the cross upon the field of blood?"

Before long Beecher had his audience with him. He did not, indeed, convert his opponents,

but he reduced them to silence. They had two reasons for silence. They really wanted to catch all he said, and they knew that they could gain nothing by interruption. Therefore they let him alone and listened.

"I hope you were satisfied," I said to him after the meeting.

"I should be very hard to be pleased if I was not," was his smiling reply.

In His Own Pulpit.

Time went on and the war was over, and I next met Mr. Beecher in the United States. I took out some letters of introduction to him, and I went, very naturally, to hear him preach in his church at Brooklyn.

I thought him then, and still think him, one of the greatest popular preachers that I ever heard, although I did not become reconciled to the way in which he occasionally dealt with sacred subjects in the pulpit.

I met him from time to time in New York, but he was not then very much given to making visits to New York, except to preach from some pulpit or speak from some platform. I have one very clear, one quite ineffaceable memory of his eloquence as an after-dinner speaker. There was a banquet given by the late Cyrus W. Field of New York to the commissioners sent out from England to make arrangements for the Alabama arbitration. Far down on the list of speakers came Henry Ward Beecher, who was to reply to some kindly sentiment about England and America.

The audience was pretty well wearied out. The English commissioners had never heard Mr.

Beecher, and were, I believe, under the impression that he was sure to make a very long speech, and just then they would hardly have enjoyed a very long speech from Demosthenes.

“Ten Resplendent Minutes.”

Up rose the great preacher, and enchanted the audience during ten resplendent minutes. Never did I hear more eloquence, more humor, more pathos, more common sense, more impassioned philanthropy put into an address, and all in ten minutes. Somehow it did not seem to be short, there was so much in it. The audience held their breath, fearing to lose a word of it. When the speaker broke the spell and sat down, there was a positive reverberation of applause. Sir Stafford Northcote told me afterward that he had never known such a feat accomplished by an orator in so short a time before.

Mr. Beecher had many theories about the art of public speaking and the way of managing an audience. He used to advise less experienced orators to begin in rather a low tone, so as to catch hold of the watchful attention of the meeting, and then, when that attention was secured, to let the voice go as far as it would.

I have heard other orators advise a man about to address a great meeting to begin with the full strength and clearness of his voice, so as to give the audience the comfort of knowing from the very first sentence that they would have no difficulty in following all he was likely to say. I do not know whether there are any theories really valuable in the art of oratory—really valuable, I mean, as applicable to all sorts of men.

I remember Mr. Beecher giving me some suggestions once as to the management of a great American public meeting, and I remember, too, that I felt constrained to reply: "I am sure all that is quite right and quite practicable, if you could only endow me with your voice and your electric power and your superb control over masses of men."

I take it that Beecher's method was the outgrowth and not the inspiration of Beecher's eloquence. I have heard speakers who on the whole fascinated me more than Mr. Beecher did.

I have heard speakers with whom I was more in what I may call artistic sympathy. John Bright was one of these, and Mr. Gladstone, and so also was Wendell Phillips. But I hold it among my most treasured experiences to have listened to some of Henry Ward Beecher's popular speeches.

Heroes of the Civil War.

My mind carries me back to what I may call a rally of the Army of the Potomac in Boston somewhere, I think, about the year 1872. It was, if I remember rightly, a sort of movable annual festival of the officers and men of that army.

I was courteously invited to be one of the guests at the great festival in honor of the Army of the Potomac, and very pleased and proud I was to be favored by such an invitation. I well remember the scene in the drawing-room of the Parker House — I think it was the Parker House — on the evening of the dinner. There had been various pageants and gatherings already; but the dinner was especially interesting to me

because it brought me so near to many of the men who were famous in the war, and whose careers I had followed in London with keenly interested eyes and soul.

Here in this drawing-room stood General Meade, one of the chief heroes of the hour—General Meade, who had turned the tide of war at Gettysburg when he drove back the invading army of General Lee. He struck me as being singularly like Thackeray's Colonel Newcome in appearance and manner, in noble simplicity, in manly, soldierly modesty.

I had an opportunity of meeting General Meade several times during the rally of the Army of the Potomac. I remember going with him to see a large painting of the Battle of Gettysburg in some public gallery of Boston; and I well remember the modest, quiet, self-effacing way in which he explained the movements of the fight, and showed what other men had done in it.

General Sheridan.

But the figure of General Meade is not the one that comes most strongly and clearly out in my recollections of that pleasant time in Boston. At one of the gatherings I was presented by my friend, General Custer, to Gen. Philip Sheridan. Now General Sheridan was a man whose deeds and whose fame had made an immense impression on the minds of most people in England. Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson—these were, to our thinking, the heroes and demigods of the war. To me Sheridan had a peculiar attraction naturally, for he was a man of the Irish race—that marvellous

fighting Irish race, who have contributed daring soldiers and skilled officers and famous generals to every country in the civilized world where men have battled against men!

I looked on Sheridan with a national sympathy and pride, for I felt that he had kept up with splendor the grand old traditions of the race; and of course I could not but think all the more of him because he had been fighting for the cause which had the whole sympathy of my heart. His was not certainly a very striking figure from the point of view of the painter or the sculptor. He was short, rather squatty, and of very high complexion. He had a broad chest, a strong frame and, for his stature, a commanding presence.

"A Sunburnt Napoleon."

He was very Napoleonic in feature if not in complexion—a Napoleon sunburnt by campaigning—no fierceness of sun or battle, as we know, could ever change the olive-tinted pallor of Napoleon's face. But Sheridan decidedly had much that was Napoleonic in his appearance. General Custer brought me up and presented me to Sheridan, and we had some talk—some talks, then and after—which I still hold in delighted memory.

I remember, before meeting Sheridan, I had had some conversation with General Grant in which the name and the career of General Sheridan came up. Grant delighted me as an Irishman by telling me that the common idea that Sheridan was only a brilliant, daring and successful soldier—a sort of Irish-American Murat—was a mere error.

He spoke in the highest language of Sheridan's military genius, foresight, self-control; pictured him as a genuine master in the art of war. Sheridan, he said emphatically, was a man who could command an army of a million soldiers, and do anything with them. I need hardly say that all this only increased my eagerness to meet the man who had "pushed things" and brought the war to a close.

Meetings with General Grant.

I met General Grant several times, both in the United States and in England. The first time I ever saw him he was placidly smoking a cigar on the steps of the White House. I was accompanied by the late Mr. Cyrus W. Field, who presented me, and I had some moments of talk with General Grant, who did not impress me at all as the shy and silent person he was then usually represented to be.

I met him after that in America and, as I have said, in London. I had some talk with him at a dinner-party in London, given, if I remember rightly, by Mr. John Russell Young. I was very much impressed by the clear and strong good sense of General Grant. More than that, I was impressed by a certain nimbleness of mind—I do not know any other way of putting it—which enabled him to grasp and to reply upon questions not previously considered by him.

I asked him about one or two points then in dispute between England and certain European countries, and which might have presented a certain analogy with some of the once disputed claims between England and America. He

paused for a moment, thought for a moment, and then gave me his ideas. Time and events have justified his opinions.

“Black Jack” Logan.

Going back once again to that festival of the Army of the Potomac in Boston, I may be allowed to bring up a recollection of John Logan, — or Fighting Black Jack Logan, as he used to be called. I recollect vividly his burning dark eyes, his long, dark, lank hair, his dare-devil look, his “big Injun” presence, his eloquence in public speech, his vivacity and his audacity in private conversation.

He fascinated me so much that I found in him the general idea for a prominent figure in one of my earlier novels. Of course I did not draw him to the life, and I put him into totally different conditions from those under which he really lived; but I made him a fighter in the great Civil War, and I brought him over to London.

He seemed to me from the first to be a man who must have had some story behind him, and so I felt myself all the more free to drag him into my story. It was not an unfriendly picture, and in any case it did him no harm, for it does not appear ever to have been recognized.

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